

The Red Shop's Future

A COMMUNITY WORKSHOP FOR HOPE DALE



The Red Shop's Future

A C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P F O R H O P E D A L E

Summary of workshop and recommendations to help guide future planning efforts for the Red Shop.

March 2003



Introduction

The Town of Hopedale plays an important role in the story of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The town was formed as a utopian

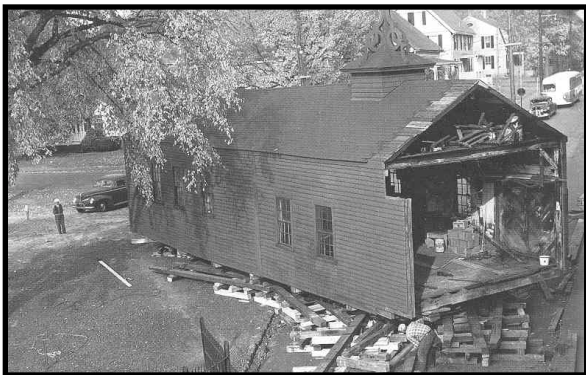


The Draper Mechanic Shop (Red Shop) on 12 Hopedale St.

community and its roots were grounded in the spiritual issues of that period in time. As the American Industrial Revolution blossomed, change was experienced as the town evolved from a utopian community into a major center for the manufacture of textile looms with the start of the Draper Machine Company.

The Draper Company grew within this community and developed a thriving manufacturing plant within the lovely utopian setting along the Mill River. A prosperous and elegant town emerged programmed with the simple activities of the day centered on work, education, and play. Over the years, the company and the community prospered until the economy changed and many textile plants moved to the South by the middle of the 20th century. The landscape, buildings, trees, water, and sky are a stage that convey, through their existence, the aspects of another age and the legacy, architecture, and context all remain to continue the story.

The first Draper shop built in 1837 (today known as the Red Shop) is an icon, a significant remnant of the important history. Although moved several times (the last in the 1950's), the shop is held dear as a reminder of a bygone time. It is also an important component of Hopedale's landscape and one of the threatened resources within the community. The opportunity to explore this resource in a larger context is invaluable. The building's survival is dependent on adaptation.



Moving the Red Shop (photo from Images of America, Hopedale)

Today, the community has emerged from an industrial community to a suburban community of Metro/West Boston. Residents keep the spirit of the historic community alive, but they no longer walk to the grocery store, park or work.

Given these changes and the need to protect and continue the town's history, Hopedale has approached the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission to assist in the development of an approach to preserve the Red Shop. To do this, it is not essential to segregate the shop from the remainder of the historic fabric of the community, quite contrary, it is to look at opportunities to integrate the remainder of that fabric somewhere into the Red Shop. This workshop intended to look at a number of ways to realize this vision.

To do this in a coordinated way, the Commission and community adopted a process that included meetings to identify a scope, goals and finally the development of a path by which these visions are to be achieved. This report is a result of those preliminary meetings and the community workshop and it identifies a course of action necessary to achieve the mission. Ultimately, as in the past, the success of the project lies within the community.

A Brief History of the Red Shop

Ebenezer Draper, having inherited his father's temple patent, began manufacturing the temple in the Red Shop, part of Adin Ballou's Hopedale Community of Practical Christian's. Built in 1841, it housed the most successful venture of the Practical Christian Community. Later, as part of the Draper Manufacturing Company, it would be moved a total of four times before resting where it now stands. Recent research uncovered by Daniel and Elaine Malloy, community historians, indicates that the existing structure is really the second floor of the original building. The copula most likely was originally from the school house



Draper loom (photo from Images of American, Hopedale)

/ meeting house. Later, the Draper Company utilized the shop for visitor and sales tours. Most recently, the Red Shop became the home for artifacts of the Draper Corporation and the visual repository of the days when Ebenezer and his brother George worked there. Largely to this date the shop has been used as a museum for field trips for schools. Presently, however, it has fallen into disrepair and lacks the amenities of heat and restroom facilities that are necessary to resume its role as a museum.

Workshop Summary

At the request of the Hopedale Historical Commission, staff of the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission



Northern side of the Red Shop with Draper plant in background.

facilitated a workshop to discuss the future of the Red Shop. The workshop occurred on Wednesday, December 4th, from 5pm to 7:30pm at the Draper Place. Its purpose was to consider future uses for the Red Shop and to begin to identify a shared vision and set goals for the operation and long term sustainability of the facility. Eleven people participated representing local residents, town officials, Friends of Hopedale Historical Society, Friends of Adin Ballou,

Hopedale Public Schools, and Hopedale Historical Commission. The workshop facilitators were Halford Welch, Juliet Walker and Ranger Chuck Arning from the Corridor Commission.

Mr. Welch opened the workshop with an introductory presentation on the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor which encompasses 24 communities within the Blackstone River Valley. The National Heritage Corridor Commission was created by act of Congress in 1986 to recognize the national significance of the region – the birthplace of *The American Industrial Revolution*. The Commission is dedicated to helping communities like Hopedale preserve their

cultural and natural heritage while charting a vibrant future for the region. The Village of Hopedale is an integral part of the Heritage Corridor's story, and the Red Shop is a critical element of that history.

Attendees of the workshop were tasked with the development of an appropriate use and management strategy for this landmark. Towards this end, participants were asked to undertake a number of brainstorming exercises throughout the course of the evening to generate various concepts that could be prioritized and later considered in greater detail. A summary of these is included in the Appendix, and the main themes are highlighted in the recommendations below. Based on the discussions at the workshop, the staff of the Corridor Commission staff has developed the following recommendations to help guide future planning efforts.

Key Themes

The Building: The Red Shop is located within the Hopedale Village Historic District, recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is listed as a contributing structure to the district, and its present day location along the Hopedale Parklands is part of the contributing historic landscape.

The Setting: A combination of buildings and landscapes contribute to the historic landscape of the Hopedale Village Historic District. The site on which the Red Shop is currently located (although not its original location) is an exceptional location which encourages better integration of the building and its natural surroundings. In addition, its proximity to the pond presents opportunities for incorporating water recreation into future uses for the site.



Red shop and mill pond.

Telling the Story: Although the Red Shop itself is historically symbolic as the oldest Draper shop in town, it is the entire history of the town of Hopedale that is significant for the Blackstone Valley as a region. The story that has given this region its National distinction is the story of the American Industrial Revolution. One of the goals of the Corridor Commission is to help communicate that story on many levels. It is important that future uses for the Red Shop will help to tell the story not only of the town, but of the entire region.

Recommended Course of Action

The purpose of this workshop was to initiate discussion about the future of the Red Shop. This was an important first step as it brought together some of the key community groups who have a vested interest in preserving this historical landmark. The workshop also generated a number of creative uses for the Red Shop that will be helpful for determining a long-term management plan for the building and the site. The following outline is offered as a recommended action plan to formalize the process that will help bring these ideas to fruition.

Action Plan

Goal To develop the Red Shop within the context of the Mill River landscape as a multi-purpose facility, integrated within the Hopedale community for this and future generations, to be a center for education, information gathering, and to serve as a central meeting place for the residents, visitors and businesses alike.

Objectives

- 1) **Steering Committee:** Form a steering committee of potential stakeholders to be appointed by the community to explore the reuse of the facility and undertake any necessary actions to achieve that reuse.

Recommended Participants

- Hopedale Historical Commission

- Hopedale Historical Society
- Town of Hopedale Board of Selectman
- Town of Hopedale Department of Parks and Recreation
- Hopedale Schools – Curriculum Development
- Friends of Historic Hopedale / Friends of Adin Ballou
- Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission
- Private businesses
- Abutting landowners

- 2) **Funding:** Determine approximate funding necessary to undertake Master Plan (based on other community research and examples) and then seek potential funding sources.
- 3) **Scope of Work:** Develop a scope for undertaking a Master Plan within the confines of the steering committee and prepare a draft scope of work for committee review. Issue bid to prospective qualified consultants and contract with consultant to complete the tasks as outlined in the scope. Samples of contracts, scopes and master plans may be found through other community sources as well as through the Corridor Commission.
- 4) **Public Outreach and Input:** Plan a series of community open forums for discussion and potential inclusion in the Master Plan. Focus of these forums should be to continue to generate new ideas, involve stakeholders in the planning process, and educate the public about the plans. These could be conducted by the steering committee, a separate sub-committee, or the Master Plan consultant.

5) **Planning Components:**

The Master Planning process for the building and site should:

- Engage the public;
- Define potential uses and users;
- Identify specific goals and objectives;
- Outline a management plan and define preferred organizational structure;

- Give an overall image (illustration, landscape architecture, and architectural design) of the design of the facilities;
 - Suggest specific programming and events, including volunteer activities, that will help engage the community in the planning process and on-going management of the building and site;
 - Include a prioritized list of follow-up actions with specific projects, responsibilities assigned, potential funding sources, and a schedule for implementation of the plan.
- 6) **Management Committee:** Develop an ongoing management group which could be the same, or different from the steering committee, which is tasked to see the plan to fruition. This group should also have clear fundraising strategies for planning outcomes.
- 7) **Volunteers:** Recruit volunteers to staff/run events or otherwise complete sections of the plan.
- 8) **Regional Cooperation:** Cooperate with other sites and towns and the region in promoting the Red Shop and implementing the Master Plan.

Options for Future Use of the Red Shop

One of the objectives of the workshop was to generate some ideas about possible uses for the building. There was general consensus that any use of the building should:

- preserve the historical character of the building;
- enhance the historical and natural character of the surroundings;
- and help to communicate a message about the history of the area.

Based on the feedback from the workshop and the opportunities discussed above, the following uses are recommended for further consideration. The options are not

mutually exclusive, but should be considered as possible combinations of uses for the Red Shop and its surroundings. These options should be explored further in a Master Planning process.

Concept 1: Red Shop Museum & Visitor Center

This concept would focus on development of the site for weekend and special event activities and visitor services. Hopedale is an eastern entry point to the Blackstone River Valley, and the Red Shop could be an important stopping point for visitors to the Village of Hopedale and the rest of the National Heritage Corridor. Trained volunteers could staff the facility on weekends and for special events. Wayside signs, interactive displays, exhibits, and trained volunteers could inform visitors about the history of the area and direct them to other visitor sites and tourism centers around the Valley.

The use of living history as a part of the interpretation of the site can be incorporated gradually into the sites interpretive programs. First person living history programs could be included in special events. A good nearby model is the Millbury Historical Society and the Asa Waters Mansion who put on a wide variety of first person programs during the year.

In this concept, visitor amenities would be an important component for the Red Shop. Modern restroom facilities with handicap accessibility are essential as well as trained visitor center volunteer staff.

Concept 2: Red Shop Education Center



Town parkland and pond beach house.

Through partnerships with public and private schools and non-profit organizations, the Red Shop as Education Center could include programs to educate school children about the historic, cultural and natural resources of Hopedale and the Blackstone Valley. Programs would be developed around the existing site, both indoor and outdoor, taking full advantage of the natural setting of the parkland environment. Specific themes could include tying together the philosophies of the Practical Christian Socialists, the Drapers, and how they shaped the modern landscape of the Town.

Again, good visitor amenities would be necessary. Whether serving as a site for a special event, providing a destination point for bus tours, or addressing curriculum needs for the public schools – all of these uses would require restrooms, visitor information, and accessibility.

Partnerships ranging from technical & industrial arts education organizations to Massachusetts Audubon can be incorporated into this site. Volunteers would still be vital to the site, but an education specialist may also be necessary to build the partnerships and educational linkages key to building an innovative education center.

Concept 3: Red Shop Outdoor Center

By using the historical story of Hopedale as a backdrop, the Red Shop could be incorporated into the recreation system of the adjacent town parkland. Passive and active recreation opportunities such as wildlife viewing, walking, boating, and other outdoor activities would make use of the Red Shop as an outdoor center. Environmental education could also be included in the interpretive programs for the site.

The nearby pond and town parkland were historically used by both the Draper Company and the mill workers for recreational opportunities.



*Boaters on the Pond in the Hopedale Parklands in the 1920s
(photo from Images of America, Hopedale)*

The parkland has been recognized as historically significant, and a landscape inventory and assessment could identify ways to preserve and enhance the park system. Such a function is still well within the traditional character of the community.

Again, partnerships are critical to the development of the site. With an outdoor theme, the Hopedale Parks & Recreation Department would certainly have a larger role to play. Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Olmsted Center for Preservation would provide assistance in the landscape inventory and assessment.

Concept 4: The Red Shop Museum & Hopedale Historical Society

In this concept, the Red Shop would be the center of historical Hopedale. It would be the meeting place for talks, Historical Society & Historical Commission meetings, and a place to gather information on Hopedale and the Blackstone Valley. The Shop could display some of the significant artifacts that make up Hopedale's history.

Volunteers would play an important role in the curatorial management and development of this concept.

Concept 5: The Red Shop As It Is Today

The building as it is today does not have capacity to handle any of the uses outlined in the concepts above. However, for the building to be put to public use, even in a limited fashion, it would require some rehabilitation.

While there are parts of the original building still within the existing structure, the building has been patched, moved and fixed many times over its long history. It would be appropriate to undertake a complete

inventory of the building identifying what original structure is still left (circa 1840 – 1860) and what remains from the Draper “Gilded Age” era (circa 1880 – 1910). Depending on future decisions about use of the building, an inventory could help determine which components should be preserved and which ones may be altered without impacting the historic integrity of the building.

Conclusion

The Red Shop is a unique type of historic site. Although altered and moved since it was first constructed, it is the first Draper shop and therefore has significance as an icon of the Draper history in the Village of Hopedale. It is also significant because of its setting -- a part of the Hopedale Village Historic District, along the banks of an historic mill pond, close to the Town Parklands, and within the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. Planning for the future of the Red Shop presents an opportunity for the community of Hopedale to take a comprehensive look at its past and present and consider how the Red Shop can fit into the entire fabric of historic, cultural, and natural resources that are represented in the Village, the Town, and the entire region. The future of the Red Shop may be a combination of different elements – museum, park, nature preserve, visitor center, or educational facility. Undertaking a planning process will help to organize and guide decisions about what kind of future is right for the Red Shop.

Organization Resource List

This is a reference list of organizations and resources that may be able to assist with the Master Planning process and specific elements of the concepts proposed for future uses. Please also consult the appendix for a list of other organizations to reference in future planning efforts.

Heritage Preservation Services

www2.cr.nps.gov

A program of the National Park Service, provides technical assistances guides which each address a different topic in the field of historic preservation, and contain bibliographies for further information. A fundamental “first step” for information on materials conservation.

Massachusetts Historical Commission

www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc

Provides a list of publications on historic preservation including grant opportunities, survey and planning of historic resources, and technical assistance. MHC Technical Services staff can assist with application and review for the federal tax incentives program for historic preservation.

Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation

www.nps.gov/frla/aclp.htm

A National Park Service center for cultural landscape stewardship, education and technology development. Offers expertise in horticulture, landscape architecture, and history for the preservation of cultural landscapes by providing guidance on research, planning, stewardship and education.

99 Warren Street Brookline, MA 02445 (617) 566-1689

Massachusetts Audubon Society

www.massaudubon.org

Maintains wildlife sanctuaries that are open to the public and serve as the base for its conservation, education, and advocacy work across the state. Runs natural history and environmental education programs for schoolchildren as well as adults. Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary in Worcester focuses on environmental education and advocacy related to the Blackstone River Watershed.

414 Massasoit Road Worcester, Massachusetts 01604 (508) 753-6087

**John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
Commission**

www.nps.gov/blac/home.htm

Supports community preservation efforts in the Valley through a variety of public-private partnerships and programs. The Commission serves heritage sites through technical assistance, research and information, interpretation, and direct funding and can also help connect local organizations with other National Park Service resources at the national and regional level.

1 Depot Sq. Woonsocket, RI 02895 (401) 762-0250

Appendix

Summary of Workshop Discussions

Participants

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization/Affiliation</u>
John DiPetrolo	Interested Citizen
Judy Phillips	Friends of Hopedale Historical Society
Liane Speroni	Friends of Adin Ballou
Jeanne Kinney	Friends of Adin Ballou
Elaine Malloy	
Dan Malloy	
Bill Hardiman	
Robert Hammond	
Andrea Hallion	Public Schools
Dan Schaubin-Furst	Public Schools
Merrily Sparling	Hopedale Historic Commission
Alan J. Ryan	Board of Selectmen, Historical Commission, Friends of
Historic Hopedale	

Exercise 1: Use one word to describe the building

Foundation	Drapers
Bridge	Blue-collar
Representation	Looms
Resource	Beginning
Focal Point	Symbol
Creativity/Integrity	Icon
Confluence	“3-legged stool”

Exercise 2: What are the Possible Uses for the Building & Site? How might those uses help tell the story of the Red Shop?

• Use as a museum	Use
--Part of school curriculum	Story
--Story of Adin Ballou	Story
• Living History Site	Use
• Timeline – 19 th Century Philosophy	Story
--Hopedale History timeline	
• Economic issues – Then/Now	Story
• Visual look to Hopedale – 1841 – Onward	Story
• Accessibility – a Focal Point	Use
--Parking	
--Restroom facilities	
• 19 th Century Theme Park	Use
• Home for the Historical Society	Use
• As Town archive	Use

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| • Public Facility | Use |
| --Open for skating | |
| • Not as a stand-alone, but enhances other important Hopedale Sites | Use |
| • Natural Setting | |
| • Use as a resource for environmental issues | Use |
| • Meeting Place/Public Place | Use |
| • Place to experience “town history” | Use |
| • Performance space | Use |
| • Connect to Draper Mill | Use |
| • Story of the loom/weaving | Story |
| • Red Shop in a very scenic setting | Use |
| • Can it be better preserved in another location? | Use |
| • As a shop | Use |
| • Needs to be connected to the River | Use |
| • As a winter 19 th Century recreation/historical experience | Use/Story |
| • Visitor Store to sell Historical Museum Materials | Use |
| • As a destination point | Use |
| • Greenway/Bikeway Connector Trail | Use |
| • Waterfront Recreation | Use |

Exercise 3: Based on the ideas generated in Exercise 2, each participant was asked to identify the three uses and interpretive themes they would most prefer for the site.

Most preferred uses of the site

Museum – Living History	*****
Visitor Wayside	*****
Museum – Interactive	*****
Museum – Artifact Collection	**
Park passive (scenic only)	*
Archive/Research Facility Only	
Recreation – Skate/Canoe	
Home for Historical Society	
Public Meeting Place	
Performance Area/Space	
Site based store	

Most preferred interpretive themes

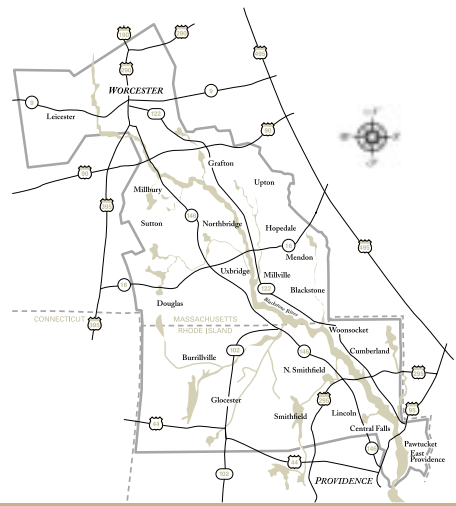
Town history	*****
19 th Century Philosophy	*****
Loom and weaving	**
Environmental history – water	*
Draper Corp. history	
19 th Century Recreational experience	

Exercise 4: Who are the potential partners?

- Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce - Tourism
- American Textile History Museum
- Parks Department (Town)
- MA Department of Environmental Management
- Olmsted Center for Preservation (Brookline, MA) – National Component
- Fin & Feather
- Universities
- Conservation Commission
- Hopedale Foundation
- Local Experts
- Friends of Historic Hopedale
- Historical Commission
- Town
- Mill owner
- Massachusetts Historical Commission
- Schools
- Unitarian Church
- Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor
- Friends of Adin Ballou
- Cultural Council
- Watershed group
- Historic Massachusetts
- Private individuals
- MA Audubon Society
- Milford Chamber of Commerce
- Banks
- Dunkin' Donuts
- Lowell NHP
- Draper Place
- Boy & Girl Scouts
- Elder/youth hostel organization
- Blackstone Vocational Technical School
- Industrial Archeological Society
- Worcester Historical Museum

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

The American Industrial Revolution began in the Blackstone River Valley. It changed the landscape of the Valley and transformed life in America. Recognizing its significance, Congress established the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission to assist in protecting and celebrating the Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution.



John H. Chafee

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY

National Heritage Corridor Commission



ONE DEPOT SQUARE, WOONSOCKET, RI 02895

PHONE 401 762-0250

WWW.NPS.GOV/BLAC/HOME.HTM